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# **U. S. Department of Energy**

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## **Federal Technical Capability Program FY 2001 Annual Plan**



**Washington, D.C. 20585**

**October 6, 2000**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Energy's Federal Technical Capability Program (FTCP) is designed to provide the management direction and tools to ensure that the federal workforce has the necessary technical competencies to safely operate its defense nuclear facilities. The Federal Technical Capability Panel (Panel), consisting of senior technical managers representing the offices operating defense nuclear facilities, is responsible for the effective implementation of the FTCP and reports to the Deputy Secretary for issues related to the technical capabilities of the workforce.

Significant progress has been made under the policies and procedures devised by the Panel. A summary of the Panel's activities for FY 2000, and recommendations for changes, were included with an Annual Report submitted to the Secretary on August 8, 2000. That report included the need for:

1. Strong senior management commitment and support for the reestablishment and institutionalization of the corporate Technical Leadership Development Program (TLDP).
2. Reinforcement of the necessity of using the critical technical capability staffing plans as a basis for meeting the needs of the organization.
3. Senior management ownership and involvement for the Technical Qualification Program and Senior Technical Safety Manager Program.
4. Active pursuit of all avenues and innovations to expand the inflow of entry-level technical personnel to ensure that a technically capable workforce continues.
5. Vigorous implementation of the recommendations arising from the Independent Assessment Report of the Federal Technical Capability Program.

The Annual Plan for FY2001 will be used by the Panel to direct its activities to meet the recommendations approved by the Secretary as well as other recurring activities that are part of the FTCP. The actions taken by the Panel in FY 2001 will assure the continued monitoring and improvement, where necessary, of the federal technical workforce.



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Chairman, Federal Technical Capability Panel

## **I. FY 2001 ANNUAL PLAN**

The Federal Technical Capability Program Annual Plan FY 2001 is based on the Annual Report to the Secretary of Energy of August 8, 2000, and on the current departmental issues relating to improving technical capability in the Department. In April and May of 2000, in accordance with the Panel's FY 2000 Action Plan, an independent assessment of the program was conducted to verify the findings of previously conducted self assessments. The report and its associated recommendations were accepted by the FTCP and have become a major driver in the formulation of the FY 2001 Action Plan. This Plan sets forth the goals and action items of the Federal Technical Capability Panel to ensure the continuation of the programs it has thus far established and implemented. Although "lead responsibility" for action items may be delegated outside the Panel, the Panel will retain oversight responsibility for the issues identified.

### **1.0 SUPPORT THE CONTINUATION OF THE CORPORATE TLDP, AND ITS INSTITUTIONALIZATION THROUGH COMMITMENTS TO FUNDING AND RECRUITMENT FOR CLASSES ON AN ANNUAL BASIS. (Panel Champion – Lloyd Piper)**

The Department reestablished the Technical Leadership Development Program (the technical intern program), with recruitment of a Class for FY2000, to provide a pool of experienced technical leaders for the future. Action 1.0 outlines the activities during FY 2001 for the further development and coordination of the TLDP.

**Action 1.1**                      The Panel will review and develop options for institutionalization of the TLDP through corporate commitments to funding and recruitment. A recommendation paper will be developed and, upon approval by the FTCP, forwarded to the Deputy Secretary for consideration and approval.

Lead Responsibility:        Hanford Agent

Completion Goal:         January 2001

**Action 1.2**                      Integrate the TLDP with Offices' staffing plans.

Lead Responsibility:        Federal Technical Capability Panel Agents for their respective offices.

Completion Goal:         January 2001

### **2.0 DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN INTEGRATED WORKFORCE PLAN TO PRESERVE CRITICAL TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES AT CLOSURE SITES. (Panel Champion – Nat Brown)**

The Deputy Secretary directed that the Office of Environmental Management (EM) and the Office of Management and Administration (MA) work together to develop guidelines addressing the retention of technical capabilities at closure sites. The Panel will monitor the activities of EM & MA and coordinate

workforce analyses and staffing plans to support closure site activities that impact the technical capability of the Department.

**Action 2.1** Prepare model Memorandum of Agreement that offices may use to address retention of individuals possessing critical technical capabilities currently employed at closure sites.

Lead Responsibility: Savannah River Agent

Completion Goal: November 2000

**Action 2.2** Identify positions with critical technical capabilities at closure sites where personnel may become available to the rest of DOE (RF & OH).

Lead Responsibility: Ohio and Rocky Flats Agents

Completion Goal: December 2000

**3.0 REINFORCE THE NECESSITY OF USING THE ANNUAL WORKFORCE ANALYSES AND STAFFING PLANS AS A BASIS FOR MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE ORGANIZATION. (Panel Champion – Steve Tower)**

The annual workforce analyses and resultant staffing plans should be used as the primary mechanism for addressing recruitment, development, and retention issues of the office and the Federal Technical Capability Program. The Panel should also identify opportunities for their Field Offices to correct existing shortages, such as using excepted service hiring practices, and to avoid potential future shortages, such as offering retention allowances and cash awards to experienced, high performing employees in this specialized area.

**Action 3.1** Provide a template for preparation of Workforce Analyses, including an agreed upon definition of "critical technical positions."

Lead Responsibility: Executive Secretary, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal: November 2000

**Action 3.2** Review the prior workforce analysis and revise and update as necessary. Develop a revised staffing plan for each office having defense nuclear facilities that identify critical technical capabilities and positions. These will include determining where current shortages of nuclear criticality safety expertise exist and where expected shortages may occur within the next three years.

Lead Responsibility: Federal Technical Capability Panel Agents for their respective offices

Completion Goal: January 2001

**Action 3.3** Prepare a consolidated report of critical technical capabilities and associated staffing needs.

Lead Responsibility: Executive Secretary, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal: February 2001

**Action 3.4** Identify "best practices" for technical staffing including the integration of workforce analyses with entry-level hiring, the TLDP, the use of excepted service, and retention of technical employees from closure sites to expand the inflow of entry-level technical personnel, and to plan for a technically capable workforce that continues into the future consistent with DOE missions.

Lead Responsibility: Federal Technical Capability Panel Agents for their respective offices

Completion Goal: January 2001

**Action 3.5** Develop a model for the use of workforce analyses based on best practices in use throughout the complex.

Lead Responsibility: Executive Secretary, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal: February 2001

**Action 3.6** Present the Panel's model to the Field and Program Offices.

Lead Responsibility: Federal Technical Capability Panel Agents for their respective offices

Completion Goal: April 2001

**Action 3.7** The Panel will address the commitments arising from the Department's Implementation Plan for Board Recommendation 2000-2, including assessment of the availability of DOE Federal expertise and recommend actions necessary to provide for capabilities for such expertise to be brought to bear in the life-cycle management of vital systems.

Lead Responsibility: Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal: As defined in 2000-2 Implementation Plan

#### **4.0 SENIOR MANAGEMENT OWNERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT FOR THE TECHNICAL QUALIFICATION PROGRAM (TQP) AND SENIOR TECHNICAL SAFETY MANAGER (STSM) PROGRAM. (Panel Champion – Roy Schepens)**

Senior managers are drivers for the TQP and STSM program, ensuring that these programs maintain credibility with sufficient rigor, discipline, and realistic schedules to make them challenging and worthwhile. Action 4.0 outlines the activities for the improvement and continuation of the TQP & STSM Program in the upcoming year.

**Action 4.1** Establish corporate guidelines for TQP & STSM qualifications, equivalencies, and exemptions, which will ensure a high standard of technical capability and provide portability of technical qualifications throughout the Department.

Lead Responsibility: Executive Secretary, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal: March 2001

**Action 4.2** Provide routine reviews and updates of the TQP and STSM Program. This will include recommended changes to personnel or positions in the STSM Program, as well as description of efforts to integrate performance evaluations, performance agreements, and individual development plans with the TQP & STSM program.

Lead Responsibility: Federal Technical Capability Panel Agents for their respective offices

Completion Goal: Begin March 2001

**Action 4.3** Complete reissuance of Functional Area Technical Qualification Standards (FAQS) and enter into EH Technical Standards program.

Lead Responsibility: Executive Secretary, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal: September 2001

**5.0 DEVELOP A MODEL FOR IDENTIFYING AND PRIORITIZING ACTIVITIES OF THE PANEL, BASED ON THE BRAINSTORMING APPROACH USED BY SAVANNAH RIVER FOR DEVELOPING PRIORITIES. (Panel Champion - Roy Schepens)**

**Action 5.1** Provide template and directions to Panel Agents.

Lead Responsibility: Executive Secretary, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal: November 2000

**Action 5.2** Identify local priorities for Panel consideration.

Lead Responsibility: Federal Technical Capability Panel Agents for their respective offices

Completion Goal: January 2001

**Action 5.3** Develop a consolidated list and revise program priorities, as appropriate.

Lead Responsibility: Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal: March 2001

**6.0 INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE FEDERAL TECHNICAL CAPABILITY PROGRAM. (Panel Champion - Larry Kirkman)**

Consistent with the President's memorandum to agency heads of June 12, 2000, the Panel will propose means to ensure that human resources management objectives, particularly regarding technical capability, and the means to accomplish these objectives are incorporated in the Department's annual review plans. The Panel will develop working relationships with the Field Management Council and the Chief Operating Officers.

**Action 6.1**                      Develop a recommendation for the Deputy Secretary regarding incorporation of Federal Technical Capability Program human resource objectives into the Department's annual review plans.

Lead Responsibility:        Executive Secretary, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal:         February 2001

**Action 6.2**                      Define the level of interface with the TDMC, FMC, and COO, and develop strategies that will result in their ownership of, commitment to, and involvement in FTCP activities.

Lead Responsibility:        Chair, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal:         December 2000

**Action 6.3**                      Provide periodic briefings on Panel activities for the TDMC, FMC, and COO.

Lead Responsibility:        Chair, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal:         Begin December 2000

**Action 6.4**                      Determine appropriate use of existing assessment methods, e.g., Environmental Safety and Health evaluations, to routinely assess the status of the Federal Technical Capability Program.

Lead Responsibility:        Chair, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal:         January 2001

**Action 6.5**                      Prepare the Annual Report on the status of the Federal Technical Capability Program to the Secretary.

Lead Responsibility:        Executive Secretary, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal:         June 2001

**Action 6.6**                      Develop a Fiscal Year 2002 Annual Plan based on the recommendations approved by Secretary of Energy in the Annual Report.

Lead Responsibility:        Executive Secretary, Federal Technical Capability Panel

Completion Goal:         August 2001